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COMMUNICATIONS.

NEW YORK, May 5, 1899.

To the Editor of THE COLLECTOR AND ART CRITIC:

Sir: Could you give in your valued paper, the names of a few places that are suitable for sketching grounds?

ARTIST.

This query has come up several times lately in conversation with artists and students, and the receipt of the above letter leads me to give a few hints, hoping that artists may add thereto from their own experience, for publication in succeeding numbers.

Not to go too far from home, you might go to Bronx and Van Cortlandt Parks, where many picturesque nooks will be found. Crossing the Sound, I find on Long Island, first, interesting spots in Port Jefferson and Port Washington. The latter place is the burying ground of the United States Navy, where old vessels are stripped and the hulks lie around on the flats. You should call at the railroad ticket agencies on Broadway for summer tourists' books, especially the summer home books of the Erie and the Ontario and Western. The illustrations therein contained suggest a large number of good localities.

The Brandywine Valley in Pennsylvania and the Valley of the Genesee up the State are well known, as is Anasquan, at Cape Ann, Massachusetts. A friend of mine tells me that one morning standing on the big rock and looking down in the valley, he counted sixty white umbrellas. Being in New England, I could suggest Salem, Mass., for its colonial material. Or Provincetown, at the extreme end of Cape Cod, with its sand dunes, old walls, shipping and rustic scenery. Also Orleans, twenty miles further, with Dutch wind-mills; or Barnegat, Marblehead, Mass. Then go anywhere on the Maine coast, especially to Buxport, the home of "Old Jed Prouty."

This will do for one summer.

SALMAGUNDI.

SALAME (salt meat)—*condito* (seasoned). "The very essence of a *Salmagundi* is the combination of divers ingredients—a product of many minds."—E. A. Duyckinck in Irving's "Salmagundi."

Whatever is done in this popular club of artists, seasoned with lawyers, physicians, writers and others, is *sui generis*. The advancement of art by means of social intercourse is the object, and the means are successful and the object is attained.

The last dinner of the season, held last week, was a fit climax to many gatherings that have been held, showing the efficiency of the former officers and the recently elected incumbents. First there came, when the smoke commenced to curl, an agreeable reunion with the veteran of the brush, Walter Shirlaw, an honorary member. This one of the founders and the first president of the Society of American Artists, spoke in a manner which appealed to the good sense and honest convictions of all present. Such sentiments as "we older men need the mingling with young blood to arouse us to energy, where ruts might cause us to grow remiss," and "we must make the very best of our present attainments; this is one of the motive factors in the progress of American art," were heartily applauded. Mr. Shirlaw will soon leave for a year's travel in Europe—the first transatlantic trip he has made in twenty years.

Then Mr. Homer Lee, in the name of the members, presented to Treasurer Joseph Hartley, a silver loving cup. And while the cup was passed from hand to hand around the circle of friends, the founder of the club spoke some hearty words of appreciation as a layman, for the work which artists do in their own individual conception, "to give to imaginary things the semblance of truth and reality."

An important function was then carried out, which was the realization of a plan originating with librarian W. H. Shelton. At his solicitation twenty-four of the artist members of the Club had each decorated a beer mug or stein. Mr. Charles Volkmar had these glazed and fired at his Crown Pottery on Long Island—and they were beauties. The librarian's aim was to make this the first of an annual sale of such mugs, to provide funds for the acquisition of library additions. The great success of this *vendue* augurs a large annual addition to the book-cases.

The steins were sold by Bruce Crane, in his own inimitable way. The first choice was sold for sixty dollars to Mr. J. Sanford Saltus, who selected the mug painted by Walter Shirlaw. Then the sale proceeded by number of registry. Some artists had not made as elaborate designs as others, or their designs did not strike the fancy of the bidders, hence values varied; there was not, however, a single stein which did not show unique artistic merit, and it was asserted at the close of the sale, by a visitor, that at succeeding sales double and

treble the prices would be obtained, when these remarkable art objects should become known outside the boundaries of the Club. Number 18, by W. Granville Smith, showing nymphs admiring a Pan statue, brought the next highest price, \$37; then followed No. 2, by Geo. Elmer Browne, holding a reproduction of the Club Book-plate designed by him, with extra illustrations on the inside. This was "rung in" for \$30; and Mr. Couese's No. 11, with a portrait of "Thunder Cloud," the Indian Chief, for \$27. The prices ranged from \$8 to the higher figures, while the following artists had contributed: Verplanck Birney, Browne, Shirlaw, Hy. Mayer, Dessar, Shelton, Taylor, Fittler, Ostrander, de Cost Smith, Couese, Schlesinger, Arnold, Drake, Sindelar, Whittemore, Minor, W. G. Smith, Volkmar, Winchell, Robinson, Blenner, Hunt, and Shurtleff. The total amount realized was \$396.

The purchasers were J. Sanford Saltus, Mr. Ward, Mr. Baillie, Geo. E. Schanck, Geo. Francis Brownell, Dr. Oppenheimer, Geo. F. Crane, Joseph Hartley, F. H. Sloan, Wm. S. Hurley, Carl Jaeger, Clarkson Cowl, Alfred Klots, W. T. Evans, Rollin H. Wilbur, Mr. Merriman.

The prize in the contest for a "Life Membership Certificate," was thereupon awarded by ballot of the members to Ed. Potthast, who gave a classical and decorative design.

STUDIO TALK,
GALLERY VISITS.

THE work of the sculptor differs very materially from that of the painter. Like the architect, he must represent his work bodily, with the three dimensions. In this way appear both statues and reliefs. He unites several statues in a group, or he represents single parts of a statue in particular busts—but all are works which can be observed from all sides. When he plans his work as does the painter, so that the back does not show, we have the relief, the single figure being raised more or less from the flat surface. According as the figure is more or less flat we have high or low relief. But even in relief the presentation must be stronger and more determined than in painting. The sculptor must be careful of overwork, as this may result in an obscure and confused presentation. The living form, therefore, is the chief study of the sculptor. On this his whole method of working must rest. He must therefore learn to comprehend true anatomy, and to use it in such a manner that he may be able to correct possible faults in his work from the model. Far more than the painter, who, by the use of colors, is able to cover up many errors, the sculptor must use the utmost exactness, so much so that a draped figure must first be modelled from the nude.

The great art-loving public sees the greater number of modern plastic works only in the cold, voiceless plaster. But what is that in comparison with the vivid idea of life to a worker in clay! How everything seems to have the warm breadth and the rosy flesh of life; how soft every little fold; how the whole appearance pulsates with fresh life! This warmth of blood, this softness and flexibility of the limbs, this lifelike gleam of the round cheek, these speaking lips can only be expressed in clay or marble, and although Thorwaldsen said, "Plaster is death," we yet feel life, vigorous life, yea even the soul and mind in the creations of the sculptor.

Such thoughts came to me while watching William Ordway Partridge at work in his studio on a portrait bust of the poet Shelley. When one stands before that malleable clay one sees the nervous and sensitive lines of that exquisite temperament, one sees the thrilling of the nostrils, that almost imperceptible contraction of the outer corners of the eyelids, and one hears the voice that spoke:

"Oh world, oh life, oh time!
On whose last steps I climb;
Trembling at that where I had stood before.
When will return again the glory of your prime?
No more, ah, nevermore!"

This bust is one of a series of English poets, commissioned by a Chicago gentleman, whereof the Byron and Burns heads are finished, while I saw the rough moulds of Tennyson and Scott.

On a recent visit to Washington I took a ramble through Rock Creek Cemetery, where is the beautiful monument designed by Partridge on the Kauffmann plot, entitled "Loving Memory." On a circular bench, the Greek *ekhedra*, of granite, in the back of which are set seven bronze tablets, illustrating the story of life, there sits a little to one side a female figure in meditative pose, which, spite the bronze in which it is cast, shows a remarkable softness and suppleness, and the ideal of grace and beauty; a large bronze vase of exquisite lining stands before her. This and the plaster casting of the front